Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 JERUSA 00987 051536Z
ACTION NODS-00

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /001 W
----------124505 051545Z /14
O 051520Z APR 78
FM AMCONSUL JERUSALEM
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 0696
INFO AMEMBASSY BEIRUT IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T JERUSALEM 0987

EXDIS HANDLE AS NODIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PGOV, PBOR, MARR, UNSC, IS, LE, XF
SUBJECT: QASMIYA BRIDGE

REF: (A) BEIRUT 1877, (B) JERUSALEM 966

1. BEIRUT CORRECT THIRD SENTENCE PARA FIVE JERUSALEM 966 TOO ELLIPTIC. RIGHTLY OR WRONGLY, SIILASVUO CONSIDERS QASMIYA BRIDGE TO BE THE TOUCHSTONE OF UNIFIL'S EFFECTIVENESS IN GRADUALLY REINTRODUCING GOL'S AUTHORITY IN THE CRITICAL TYRE AREA.

2. WE KNOW FROM URQUHART THAT SIILASVUO AT ONE TIME TOYED WITH GUR'S SUGGESTION IDF SEIZE BRIDGE AND, IN WAKE OF ARAB HOWLS, AGREE TO TURN IT OVER TO UNIFIL. AS URQUHART OBSERVED, PROBLEM WITH THIS IS THAT IDF WOULD BE SEEN TO BE DOING UNIFIL'S WORK.

3. OUR IMPRESSION IS THAT SIILASVUO IS NOW WORKING IN THE DIRECTION OF USING LOGISTICS TO TRY TO ACHIEVE MORE NORMAL SITUATION ON COASTAL ROAD, INCLUDING THE BRIDGE. UNIFIL HQ WILL BE SET UP AT AZ ZAHRANI AND MAIN LOGIS-
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TIC BASE IS PLANNED FOR TYRE. THIS WILL NECESSITATE A GREAT DEAL OF UN TRAFFIC BETWEEN THESE TWO POINTS.

4. SIILASVUO SAYS THERE ARE NO LESS THAN EIGHT DIFFERENT PALESTINIAN GROUPS NOW AT THE BRIDGE, ALL WATCHING EACH OTHER AS WELL AS THE TRAFFIC. TO DATE, THE UN HAS NOT EXPERIENCED SERIOUS CROSSING PROBLEMS. IT COULD BE THAT SIILASVUO IS THINKING

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OF GRADUALLY INTRODUCING UN PRESENCE IN CONNECTION WITH ANTICIPATED HEAVY UN TRAFFIC AND PERHAPS LEBANESE GENDARMES AS WELL AS LEBANESE ARMY ELEMENTS EVENTUALLY. THIS WOULD RESULT IN SOMEWHAT MESSY SITUATION, BUT IT WOULD AT LEAST DILUTE PRESENT EXCLUSIVE PALESTINIAN CONTROL.

5. PERHAPS UN CAN EVENTUALLY ESTABLISH A 7TH CHECKPOINT ON THE ROAD BETWEEN TYRE AND THE BRIDGE, BUT WE HAVE NO EVIDENCE UNIFIL IS PLANNING THIS IN NEAR FUTURE.
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Message Attributes

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